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THE GULL



Golden Gate Audubon Society Berkeley, California Volume 74 Number 3 March 1992

MARCH PROGRAM ON S²W²

That's shorthand for Shorebirds, Seabirds, Waterfowl and Waders of the San Francisco Bay Area. **Paul Jones**, biologist for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), will speak at our Thursday, March 12th meeting, which will begin at **7:30 p.m. in Berkeley**. This meeting will be at the Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda instead of our regular March San Francisco location, due to renovations at the Randall Museum.

Have you wondered why a curlew's bill curves? Why do shorebirds come in so many varieties of bill size and leg length? Paul will answer these and many other questions as he talks about the form, function and feeding ecology of the S²W²'s. We will also learn about what they do, where they live, and where they breed around here as Paul takes on a taxonomic tour of shorebird, seabirds, waterfowl and waders.

Paul Jones works on the San Francisco Estuary Project for the EPA, and is currently studying marine mammals and seabirds in the Gulf of the Farallones. He is also a naturalist who leads national and international tours. Paul earned his MS degree studying California gulls, and has a passion for natural history photography.

With the construction underway at the Randall Museum, all of the GGAS programs will be in Berkeley until fall, 1992. We apologize for the inconvenience to our San Francisco members, and we hope you make the flight across the Bay!

— JOELLE BUFFA

GOOD WETLANDS BILLS, FOR A CHANGE!

AT LAST, a strong, environmentally sound, wetlands bill (HR*) has been introduced by Rep. Don Edwards, while Rep. Barbara Boxer has introduced a bill (HR*) to require "no net loss of wetlands that were present on June 8, 1989" reminding the President of his campaign promise. (A note of thanks to each of them would be appropriate.)

Rep. Edward's bill has the support of the environmental community. It would be a reasonable alternative to HR1330, the anti-wetlands bill which could lead to destruction of over 50% of existing wetlands nationally. It does attempt to ease some of the burdens of small landowners and agriculture who see

*not numbered at press time (continued, p. 47)

CHRISTMAS COUNT REPORT IN THIS ISSUE,
INCLUDING THE FIRST YOSEMITE COUNT
SINCE 1972 — SEED SALE — BIRDATHON '92.

FIELD TRIPS CALENDAR

Saturday, March 7—Foster City shoreline. Meet at 8 a.m. for a one-half day trip. To get there from Hwy. 101 take the Hillsdale Exit east toward the bay for about one mile; pass the lagoon (on right) and turn right to Shell Blvd. Meet in the parking lot just beyond buildings on the right. From the East Bay take Hwy. 92 across the San Mateo Bridge to Foster City Blvd.; go south to Hillsdale Blvd.; turn right and continue about one-half mile to Shell Blvd., and go left to the parking lot meeting place. (If you pass Leo Ryan Park you've gone too far.)

We will carpool to Leo Ryan Park, Shell Beach and Belmont Slough looking at waterfowl and shorebirds. (Starlings and Rock Doves are guaranteed.) We hope to see Red-necked Grebes, Barrow's Goldeneyes, Eurasian Wigeons, Hooded Mergansers, Red Knots, and perhaps a Peregrine Falcon. Leader: Dan Murphy (564-0074). (✓)

Wednesday, March 11—Mini-trip to Mitchell Canyon. We will meet at 9:30 a.m. Take Hwy. 24 through the Caldecott Tunnel. At Walnut Creek take exit on Ygnacio Valley Rd. Go approximately 8 miles, then turn right onto Clayton Rd. Go one mile and make a right onto Mitchell Canyon Rd. and proceed to the parking lot at the end of the road. This is a delightful area with easy streamside walking and many songbirds. Wear shoes suitable for walking in mud. Bring lunch. Rain

cancels. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (351-9301) and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

Saturday, March 14—San Francisco Bird Blitz. In past years participants have reported over 100 species within the City limits. This year's mad dash to beat all previous records will begin at 7 a.m. sharp at the foot of Van Ness Ave. From there we will caravan to other sites including Golden Gate Park, Sutro Baths, Lake Merced and Candlestick Point. Bring lunch and liquids. We will bird until dusk, then adjourn to a nearby restaurant where, for a minimal cost, we can avoid going home to cook dinner. Leader: Alan Hopkins (664-0983). (✓)

Sunday, March 15—Tennessee Cove. This will be a two mile walk to Tennessee Cove, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, to look for land birds (including White-throated Swifts) and shorebirds. From San Francisco take Hwy. 101 north to Marin Co. and exit on Hwy. 1 toward Mill Valley and Stinson Beach. In about one quarter mile turn left onto Tennessee Valley Rd. Meet at the end of the road at 9 a.m. Bring lunch. Leader: Betty Short (921-3020, work) (✓)

Saturday, March 28—Gardening for the environment. A tour of Strybing Arboretum, Golden Gate Park. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the corner of 15th Ave. and Lincoln Way. Join Don Mahoney from the Arboretum, Alan Hopkins from GGAS and Barbara Deutsch as we discuss ways to increase the natural habitat value of your yard. We will note

Send address changes to office promptly; Post office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$30 per year (individual); \$38 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$10 per year; single issues \$1. High school and college student membership \$18 per year. Senior citizen individual \$21, senior citizen family \$23. Associate Membership in Golden Gate Audubon Society, \$10 per year.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 15, 1917,
and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month, and July 15th for September issue.

Published each month except August by the Golden Gate Audubon Society, office address, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G, Berkeley, CA 94702. Special third class postage paid in Oakland, CA.
(THE GULL -ISSN 0164-971X)

the plants and trees that attract wildlife, and observe the birds, butterflies, and beneficial bugs that use them. A resource sheet will be provided for interested gardeners.

Prior to the Arboretum tour the leaders will be meeting on Monday, March 23rd with the Native Plant Society and Jeff Caldwell, the restorationist from the Coyote Creek Riparian Preserve. The meeting will be in the San Francisco County Fair Building, 9th Ave. and Martin Luther King Jr. Way at 7:30 p.m. All GGAS members are welcome.

Saturday, March 28—Bodega Bay. Meet at 9 a.m. East Shore Rd. (one-half mile north of Diekmann's Bay Store). We will bird for spring migrants in Bodega Harbor and Bodega Head, observing waterfowl and shorebirds in their spring plumage. Bring a bag lunch and liquids.

If you arrive Friday, lodging is available at the Best Western Motel (707/875-3525) and the Inn at the Tides (800/541-7788). There are nice campsites at the Dune's State Park (\$) just north of our meeting place, but plan to get there early to be sure of getting a spot, or call Ticketron to reserve one. Leader: Nancy Conzett (707/875-2231) Bodega Bay. (✓)

Sunday, March 29—Sunol Regional Park. Meet at 8:30 a.m. inside the park entrance at the parking lot on the left. Take I-680 south, turn off at Calaveras Rd. (the freeway sign is marked: Calaveras Rd., Dumbarton Bridge, Calif. 84). Go south (left) and follow the signs to Sunol Regional Park, about five miles. Bring lunch and liquids. (Park regulations prohibit alcoholic beverages.) We should see Golden Eagles, a variety of winter residents and early spring migrants. This trip is also good for wildflowers. Leader: Peter Allen (892-8063) \$ (✓)

Saturday, April 4—Briones Regional Park. For this one-half day trip meet in the park at 9 a.m. Take Hwy. 24 and exit on the Orinda turnoff. Turn left and go back under the freeway on Camino Pablo. Continue northwest about two miles to Bear Creek Rd. Turn right and go about 4.5 miles to the Briones Regional Park entrance on the right (just beyond Happy Valley Rd.). Meet in the first parking area on the left. We will be looking for resident birds and early migrants. Leader: David George (339-0765) (✓)

Wednesday, April 8—Mini-trip to Sunol Regional Park. Meet at 9 a.m. at the Ranger Station parking lot inside the park. Take Hwy. 680 south to about eight miles beyond the intersection of Hwy. 580. Turn off at Calaveras Rd.; go left and follow the signs to Sunol Regional Park. We may see Lark Sparrows, Golden Eagles, and Northern Orioles plus resident birds of the area. Bring lunch. Rain cancels trip. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (351-9301) and Jean-Marie Spoelman. \$ (✓)

Saturday, April 11—Beginners' trip to Bothe-Napa Valley State Park. Meet at 9 a.m. in the parking lot. This is a particularly beautiful park in the spring, with migrating warblers and vireos, Winter Wrens and, if we're lucky, Pileated Woodpeckers. We will walk about four to five miles and bird mostly by ear. This trip is especially good for beginners.

From the East Bay drive north on I-80 beyond Vallejo and take the Napa exit. Follow Hwy. 29 to St. Helena. The entrance to the park is on the left just past the Ole Bale Mill north of St. Helena. From the West Bay take Hwy. 101 north to Hwy. 37 near Novato; go east to the junction with Hwy. 121; turn left and continue on 121 until it joins Hwy. 29 near Napa, then continue north on 29 to the park.

Bring lunch and liquids. Rain cancels trip. Please carpool if possible. Leader: Gene Hull (525-6893). \$ (✓)

PLAN AHEAD

Sunday, May 3—Bouverie Audubon Preserve (Near Glen Ellen). We will meet at 8 a.m. near the Preserve to car-pool. The Bouverie people require advance notice of the number of participants. If you plan to attend you must phone the organizers before April 10th. You will be given the meeting place and details when you phone.

The organizers are Gloria Markowitz and Ken Ackerman, and reservations should be made by phoning (415) 892-2910.

This should be a prime time at the Preserve—lots of bird activity and wildflowers too. Plan to hike and carry your lunch.

Trips marked with \$ go to parks and other sites that require an entrance fee.

Carpooling arrangements will be attempted for trips marked (✓).

Problems: If you need a ride or can take a passenger, or if you need information and have difficulty reaching a field trip leader, call Russ Wilson, Field Trips Committee Chmn. (524-2399).

— FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

HELP AT OUR RANCH

This year GGAS, as usual, has responsibility for providing hosts at Audubon Canyon Ranch. Don't leave it to the board members, please. Come out and enjoy the experience. (See Dan Murphy's description of the duties, p. 53, they are not onerous.)

Our dates are weekend days in June, Memorial Day, May 25 and July 19th. Call Barbara Rivines at (510) 843-2222 to get on the schedule or for more information. Thanks.

JANUARY OBSERVATIONS

Last January, I went to South Texas for a week, not an unusual place for a birder to head in the winter. This year, in a fit of incredible perversity, I went to Shetland in January, a decision that can only be likened to that of the bear who went over the mountain. It had been wonderful in the summer so what was it like in the winter stuck out there between the North Atlantic and the North Sea at about the same latitude as Anchorage? Well, it was dark (daylight lasted from 9 to 3) and windy (35 mph breezes were the norm) but the temperatures were comparatively mild (mid-40's — the mitigating influence of the Gulf Stream is considerable) and of course the place was gorgeous and there certainly wasn't a plethora of tourists. Bird life was a good deal sparser than I had envisioned, although the huge wintering flocks of ducks and shorebirds here may accustom us to numbers that are unlikely elsewhere. A group of more than a dozen ducks was unusual and small shorebirds tended to be only Dunlin or Ruddy Turnstones and very few of them, at that. What there were were thousands of Fulmars, every bit as appealing in the winter as they were in the summer with their dark, gentle, deep-set eyes, wheeling in the winds and sitting around chortling at each other. Their numbers have increased phenomenally in the last thirty years and they are viewed as something of a problem, to state it in the mildest terms, but to the casual visitor the experience is quite glorious.

It's interesting to contemplate the appeal of a place like this, stark and wind-swept as it is, although it was made clearer shortly after I returned home and spent a day on outer Pt. Reyes. The similarities between the places have not gone unnoticed ("Inverness" was not

named by accident, although Shetlanders might take umbrage at being lumped with mainland Scots) and it's evident that both engender the same feelings of wildness and freedom. Shetland is truly remote; Pt. Reyes just feels that way. How lucky we are!

* * *

Pelagic trips are few and far between this time of year, weather and rough seas being something more than mild deterrents, so any boat that ventures forth is bound to return with information of interest. On February 1, the *New Sea Angler*, blessed with low winds and moderate seas, ventured 20 miles west of the Cordell Bank to the 2000 fathom mark (12,000 feet deep). There and along the way, they found Black-footed Albatross (20-25); Laysan Albatross (5-7); Flesh-footed Shearwaters (3); Short-tailed Shearwaters (25); Northern Fulmars (2); Black-legged Kittiwakes (3); Ancient Murrelet (2); and Rhinoceros Auklets (hundreds) among other things (RS, MiF). The trip brought up a couple of interesting points. Although there were Black-footed Albatross with the boat almost continuously from about an hour out of Bodega Bay, Laysan Albatross did not appear until after the continental shelf had dropped off beyond the Cordell Bank and they disappeared at about the same point on the return trip, a pretty clear indication of the deep-water nature of the species. The water temperature was about three degrees warmer than normal and that, presumably, is the reason for the dearth of Fulmars and Kittiwakes, species which might be expected in substantially larger numbers during the winter. There was a great deal of visible krill in the water which at certain times of the year can mean a lot of whale activity, but by now the Blues and Humpbacks have moved south to Mexico and beyond to calve and the Grey Whales are bottom feeders, less affected

by the presence of krill. The only sign of the gastronomic largesse was a single large feeding flock of gulls, shearwaters and auklets about five miles from shore on the return trip.

The **Yellow-billed Loon** continued to be seen at Whiskeytown Reservoir through the month (BY, mob), and contrary to my thinly-veiled cynicism about the likelihood of this bird occurring at a place like Whiskeytown, its appearance at inland locales is not unheard of. The **Whooper Swan** and up to two Trumpeter Swans remained at Tule Lake and Lower Klamath NWRs (LCo, DCR, GMF, RoH). There were a total of six Tufted Ducks reported: two in SF (LLu, mob); one in Oakland (KSw, SMI, MLa, SBT); two at Mare Island (DASH); and one in Novato (GiT, BiL). A King Eider showed up in a flock of scoter in Humboldt Bay from the 7th to the 11th (*fide* BED, JCS) and the **Steller's Eider** remained at Bodega Bay through the month (mob). Up to ten Lesser Golden Plovers were wintering at Lawson's Landing on Tomales Bay (GMF); two were seen at Pebble Beach on the San Mateo coast on the 21st (AWi, RSTh); and another was at the SamTrans Bus Yard on the 30th (ASH). A single Rock Sandpiper continued to be reported from Pebble Beach (mob). PRBO's winter shorebird count in the Central Valley turned up at least one and perhaps two Stilt Sandpipers on the 24th to 26th (DS, DES, RJR, MiF). Black-legged Kittiwakes may be scarce on the open ocean this winter, but a slightly misplaced one flew past the Martinez Marina on the 8th (RJR).

One Yellow-bellied Sapsucker could still be seen at GG Park through the end of the month (mob); and a Red-naped Sapsucker was observed on Gazos Creek Rd., San Mateo Co., on the 19th (RSTh). Setting aside its December elusiveness, the **Least Flycatcher** at the Berkeley Botanical Garden picked a spot

in back of one of the greenhouses and spent all of January there (MV, MH, EH, JEW). Altogether, five Eastern Phoebes, a veritable explosion, were reported: Pt. Reyes (SMo); Novato (mob); Big Basin (RMrr, AME); Santa Cruz (EF, mob); and Five Brooks (MLR). On the 26th, an adult male Vermilion Flycatcher was a bit of a shock at Gray Lodge WMA where the ducks and geese are generally the main attraction this time of year (RKe, FGB, ShH, RJR).

We have a few Townsend's Solitaires every winter and this is no exception: one on the 13th at Briones (MaR); and one on the 15th at Black Diamond Mines (SGI). The Hayward Shoreline was an unlikely spot for a Sage Thrasher from Dec. 29th to Jan. 3rd (RJR).

As usual, there are a few warblers to report: Nashville Warbler at Pescadero on the 4th and Gazos Creek Rd. on the 12th (AME); Yellow Warbler at Lake Merced on Feb. 2 (ASH); Palm Warbler at Las Gallinas in Marin thru Feb. 2 (AC), Pajaro Dunes on New Year's (fide LLu), and Alameda on the 28th (JMR); Black-and-white Warbler in Carmel thru the 24th (fide LLu), Pescadero thru the 12th (AME, RSTh) and Monterey on the 26th (fide LLu); and an American Redstart in Santa Cruz on the 19th (JAs). At least one Summer Tanager continued to be seen at Lake Merced thru Feb. 2 (mob) and, more unusual for this time of year, a Western Tanager showed up in Golden Gate Park on Feb. 2 (ASH). Although there are always exceptions, during the winter our usual migratory breeding birds have departed and when what might be a straggler is spotted it generally turns out to be something much rarer whose migration route has gone awry. Thus, winter *Empidonax* are almost never Western Flycatchers; Kingbirds are Tropical, not Western; and Grosbeaks are Rose-breasted, not Black-headed. Speaking of which, the Rose-breasted Grosbeak, back for a second year, continued to come to a feeder in

Woodside (AME); and another individual was reported from Gazos Creek Rd. on the 3rd (SGI).

And of course there was the usual *pot-pourri* of sparrows. The American Tree Sparrow remained in Pescadero thru the month (mob); a Clay-colored Sparrow was reported in Santa Cruz on the 22nd (fide LLu); a Grasshopper Sparrow, an exception to the rule that our normal migratory passerines are not found here in the winter, was hit by a car near Pigeon Pt. (CBe) — a bookmaker would have had a field-day figuring the odds on that one. Sharp-tailed Sparrows, scarcer than usual this year, were reported from Palo Alto Baylands on the 19th (MJM) and Sunnyvale Sewer Ponds on Feb. 2 (JMcK). The Harris' Sparrow remained in Union City thru the 3rd (SGI, RJR). Of somewhat dubious distinction is the first winter record in Modoc County of Brown-headed Cowbird — a single individual seen on the 9th in Surprise Valley (JCS). The **Brambling** remained at Ferndale in Humboldt County at least thru the 19th (SMI); and five **Red Crossbills**, hard to find this year, were reported from Golden Gate Park on Feb. 2 (ASH).

OBSERVERS:

John Ascher, Dick Ashworth, Chris Benesch, Florence G. Bennett, Anthony Cermak, Luke Cole, Bruce E. Deuel, Alan M. Eisner, Mike Feighner, Gary M. Fellers, Eric Feuss, Steve Glover, Rob Hamilton, Shawn Hayes, Mark Homrighausen, Eli Holst, Alan S. Hopkins, Robert Keifer, Bill Lenarz, Les Lieurance, Michael J. Mammoser, John McKean, Robert Merrill, S. Mlodinow, Scott Morrical, Mark Rauzon, David C. Rice, Jean M. Richmond, Robert J. Richmond, Mary Louise Rosegay, Donald E. Schmoltdt, Dave Shuford, Rich Stallcup, John C. Sterling, K. Swenson, Scott B. Terrill, Gil Thompson, Ron S. Thorne, Martha Vaughan, Janet E. Wessel, Anna Wilcox, Bob Yutzy.

—ANN DEWART

THE CHRISTMAS COUNT REPORT-1991

OAKLAND—DEC. 15, 1991

Once again, the Oakland Christmas Bird Count was blessed with excellent weather. We put 135 observers in the field, and had another 10 who stayed home to watch feeders. The number of species observed (174) was right in line with the usual numbers for this count; but the number of individual birds observed (111,831) was down 11% from last year. (Contributing factors to this decrease may include fire, drought, and a decline in the number of observers.) In comparing this year's numbers with those on file since 1974, we found 16 species tallied at record low numbers Green-backed Heron, was not seen at all this year), 11 species tallied at record high numbers (the most exciting were 6 Brant; only 1 had ever been reported previously). This year we added a new species, the Least Flycatcher to our CBC list. The same individual was also a record bird for Alameda County.

—KAY LOUGHMAN
—MARTHA VAUGHAN
Compilers

SAN FRANCISCO—DEC. 27, 1991

The morning dawned under cloudy skies which turned to rain by about 11 a.m. The 61 observers and 2 additional feeder watchers tallied 42,841 birds of 150 species. Our list was highlighted by a Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel and an Osprey. The real story was in numbers. We counted an all time low in species and total birds. We didn't think it could get much worse than it was last year after the freeze, but it certainly did. Perhaps last year's freeze had a longer impact than we suspected, or more likely the long term impact of the drought is finally becoming apparent. One thing we could all see was that the eucalyptus was not in bloom. Thus there was a very limited food source for insect and nectar dependent birds, and their reduced numbers confirm that idea. Another problem seemed to be the low-pressure system which accompanied the storm. These conditions often result in reduced activity by birds, and that seemed to be the case on count day. Even with the low count, few rarities and unpleasant weather, everyone seemed to have a good time.

—DAN MURPHY

SPECIES	OAKLAND	S.F.
Red-throated Loon	27	57
Pacific Loon	5	60
Common Loon	46	9
loon, species	0	88
Pied-billed Grebe	128	33
Horned Grebe	139	48
Red-necked Grebe	2	0
Eared Grebe	34	25
Western Grebe	550	1,492
Clark's Grebe	168	196
<i>Aechmophorus</i> , sp.	98	139
Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel	0	1
American White Pelican	26	0
Brown Pelican	63	177
Double-crested Cormorant	829	178
Brandt's Cormorant	24	264
Pelagic Cormorant	6	4
Great Blue Heron	36	14
Great Egret	49	10
Snowy Egret	88	20

SPECIES	OAKLAND	S.F.
Cattle Egret	1	0
Black-crowned Night-Heron	99	45
Greater White-fronted Goose	33	0
Snow Goose	5	1
Brandt	6	0
Canada Goose	1,606	148
Wood Duck	10	0
Green-winged Teal (Amer.)	206	1
Mallard	1,125	994
Northern Pintail	645	0
Cinnamon Teal	44	0
Northern Shoveler	472	12
Gadwall	224	3
Eurasian Wigeon	4	0
American Wigeon	1,324	331
Canvasback	432	21
Redhead	126	0
Ring-necked Duck	793	69
Tufted Duck	0	1
Greater Scaup	3,810	481

SPECIES	OAKLAND	S.F.	SPECIES	OAKLAND	S.F.
Lesser Scaup	382	381	Ring-billed Gull	2,222	420
scaup, species	1,942	3,000	California Gull	1,132	1,037
Oldsquaw	1	0	Herring Gull	47	10
Black Scoter	0	21	Thayer's Gull	0	9
Surf Scoter	7,797	571	Western Gull	1,494	2,795
White-winged Scoter	28	21	W. x Glaucous-winged Gull	5	19
scoter sp.	1,000	85	Glaucous-winged Gull	216	214
Common Goldeneye	536	32	gull, species	2,891	1,169
Barrow's Goldeneye	34	1	Forster's Tern	115	100
Bufflehead	2,406	505	Common Murre	0	35
Hooded Merganser	6	0	Rock Dove	1,157	3,414
Common Merganser	25	0	Band-tailed Pigeon	238	82
Red-breasted Merganser	52	10	Mourning Dove	1,154	538
Ruddy Duck	5,464	916	Barn Owl	1	0
duck sp.	2	0	Western Screech Owl	2	2
Turkey Vulture	166	4	Great Horned Owl	29	4
Osprey	7	1	Burrowing Owl	2	0
Black-shouldered Kite	9	0	Northern Saw-whet Owl	1	0
Northern Harrier	13	6	White-throated Swift	3	0
Sharp-shinned Hawk	24	12	Anna's Hummingbird	275	143
Cooper's Hawk	8	5	Selasphorus , species	1	0
<i>Accipiter</i> , species	3	1	Belted Kingfisher	15	3
Red-shouldered Hawk	2	9	Acorn Woodpecker	16	0
Red-tailed Hawk	146	60	Red-breasted Sapsucker	13	1
Golden Eagle	2	0	Nuttall's Woodpecker	45	0
American Kestrel	34	27	Downy Woodpecker	14	16
Merlin	3	1	Hairy Woodpecker	8	0
Peregrine Falcon	0	1	Northern (Yel.-sh.) Flicker	2	1
California Quail	195	44	N. (Yel.x Red-sh.) Flicker	24	1
Clapper Rail	5	0	Northern (Red-sh.) Flicker	301	86
Virginia Rail	0	2	Least Flycatcher	1	0
Sora	1	1	Black Phoebe	50	19
American Coot	3,398	756	Say's Phoebe	3	1
Black-bellied Plover	1,373	574	Horned Lark	30	0
Snowy Plover	3	14	Tree Swallow	3	0
Semipalmated Plover	25	24	Steller's Jay	253	9
Killdeer	268	667	Scrub Jay	527	63
Black Oystercatcher	0	7	American Crow	136	40
Black-necked Stilt	69	11	Common Raven	38	61
American Avocet	2,526	298	Chestnut-backed Chickadee	961	105
Greater Yellowlegs	23	2	Plain Titmouse	85	0
Willet	1,465	674	Bushtit	1,136	202
Wandering Tattler	0	1	Red-breasted Nuthatch	147	1
Spotted Sandpiper	18	0	White-breasted Nuthatch	17	0
Whimbrel	15	9	Pygmy Nuthatch	39	170
Long-billed Curlew	135	41	Brown Creeper	44	22
Marbled Godwit	1,286	64	Bewick's Wren	69	4
Ruddy Turnstone	12	14	House Wren	1	0
Black Turnstone	38	21	Winter Wren	16	21
Surfbird	0	28	Marsh Wren	2	8
Red Knot	17	48	Golden-crowned Kinglet	30	16
Sanderling	470	521	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	628	125
Western Sandpiper	13,893	1,711	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	1	0
Least Sandpiper	849	192	Western Bluebird	150	0
Dunlin	8,434	1,636	Hermit Thrush	140	40
peep, species	4,657	0	American Robin	4,528	513
Short-billed Dowitcher	232	1	Varied Thrush	194	12
Long-billed Dowitchers	119	1	Wrentit	203	44
dowitcher, species	1,465	986	Northern Mockingbird	48	8
Common Snipe	50	3	California Thrasher	15	1
Bonaparte's Gull	17	2	American Pipit	166	21
Heermann's Gull	0	9	Cedar Waxwing	828	134
Mew Gull	620	3,105	European Starling	2,213	2,537

SPECIES	OAKLAND S.F.	
Hutton's Vireo	26	9
Orange-crowned Warbler	1	7
Yellow-rumped (Myr.) Warbl	13	3
Yellow-rumped (Aud.) Warbl	302	111
Yellow-rumped Warbler	418	175
Townsend's Warbler	76	47
Hermit Warbler	2	1
Common Yellowthroat	6	8
Summer Tanager	0	1
Rufous-sided Towhee	204	16
California Towhee	588	101
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	13	0
Lark Sparrow	20	0
Savannah Sparrow (undes.)	49	25
Fox Sparrow	161	103
Song Sparrow	202	67
Lincoln's Sparrow	5	2
White-throated Sparrow	6	10
Golden-crowned Sparrow	1,938	583
White-crowned Sparrow	2,200	1,097
sparrow, species	20	150
Dark-eyed (Slate) Junco	1	0
Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco	1,695	419
Red-winged Blackbird	557	142
Tri-colored Blackbird	127	750
Western Meadowlark	453	88
Brewer's Blackbird	1,106	1,712
Brown-headed Cowbird	98	37
blackbird, species	12	0
Purple Finch	32	2
House Finch	1,393	322
Red Crossbill	10	6
Pine Siskin	195	15
Lesser Goldfinch	208	0
American Goldfinch	221	4
House Sparrow	332	387
Total Species	190	150
Total Individuals	111,831	42,841

Additional species seen in count circle
in count week but not on count day:

Oakland:	San Francisco:
American Dipper	Cinnamon Teal
	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
	Lesser Goldfinch

MONTHLY PROGRAMS
(note: all are in Berkeley)

“Effects of Forest Fragmentation on
Tropical and Eastern Breeding Birds”

Kathryn Sieving
Berkeley, April 9

“California Least Tern Natural History
and Current Status”

Leora Feeny
Berkeley, May 14

LETTER

Yosemite National Park
Jan. 23, 1992

Enclosed is a copy of the recent
Yosemite Christmas Bird Count results
you asked me to send you. I appreciate
your publishing them in *The GULL*.

I'm tentatively scheduling the 1992
Yosemite count for Sunday, Dec. 20. I'll
confirm the date before then so you can
announce it to your membership. I would
welcome the publicity—and, I hope, ad-
ditional counters. Thanks for your in-
terest and support.

Best wishes—
LOU MCKENZIE,
Chief Park Interpreter

SPECIES	NUMBER
Great Blue Heron (blue form)	3
Mallard	7
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1
Red-tailed Hawk	7
Golden Eagle, adults	2
American Kestrel	1
Band-tailed Pigeon	16
Great Horned Owl	2
Spotted Owl	1
Anna's Hummingbird	1
Belted Kingfisher	2
Acorn Woodpecker	113
Red-breasted Sapsucker	4
Williamson's Sapsucker	4
Nuttall's Woodpecker	5
Downy Woodpecker	9
Hairy Woodpecker	7
White-headed Woodpecker	19
Black-backer Woodpecker	5
Northern (Red-sh.) Flicker	25
Pileated Woodpecker	2
Black Phoebe	2
Steller's Jay	325
Scrub Jay	19
Common Raven	18
Mountain Chickadee	56
Plain Titmouse	13
Bushtit	21
Red-breasted Nuthatch	44
White-Breasted Nuthatch	6
Brown Creeper	15
Rock Wren	2
Canyon Wren	2
Bewick's Wren	2
American Dipper	4
Golden-crowned Kinglet	122
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	26
Western Bluebird	11
Townsend's Solitaire	4

SPECIES	NUMBER
American Robin	95
Varied Thrush	17
Northern Mockingbird	1
Cedar Waxwing	2
European Starling	5
Rufous-sided (Spot.) Towhee	15
California Towhee	9
Golden-crowned Sparrow	26
Dark-eyed (Slate-col.) Junco	20
Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco	63
Red-winged Blackbird	20
Brewer's Blackbird	1
Pine Grosbeak	3
Cassin's Finch	15
Pine Siskin	7
Lesser Goldfinch	8
Evening Grosbeak	18
Total Individuals	1,251
Total Species	56

There were 18 field observers in five groups.

AUDUBON'S TEN TOP TIPS FOR SAVING THE PLANET

7



SMARTEN UP ON PACKAGING —

Avoid buying products that are excessively packaged. • If the products you buy regularly are packaged in non-recyclable materials, write to the manufacturer and ask for recyclable packaging. • Protest unnecessary packaging of produce to store managers. • Return your grocery bags to the supermarket, re-use them, or use a cloth bag. You can purchase an Audubon string bag for \$5.

SIGN UP FOR BAY BIRDATHON '92

Take out a pen. Find your calendar. Mark the date of Saturday, April 28, 1992, and plan on joining in for the Bay Birdathon '92, a joint effort of Golden Gate Audubon Society and Marin Audubon Society. We need you as a member of a Birdathon Team or as a Birdathon Sponsor. The Teams, expert and not-so-expert and rank amateur birders, will venture forth in search of as many bird species as they can find. The Sponsors pledge contributions to their favorite Teams, to benefit Mono Lake and local Audubon activities. Bay Birdathon '91, last April, raised over \$20,000. With your help, we will do even better this year.

Field a Birdathon team and compete for the prize for most species seen in a 24 hour period:

Anywhere, by any means,
or

On foot, bicycle or roller blades,
or

Within the limits of a city or county,
or

By the oldest or the youngest birder

If you prefer, join Dan Murphy and "Murphy's M.O.B." on a whirlwind quest for lots of species in San Francisco and the Peninsula. Or join the "Mines Roadrunners" on Mines Road near Livermore.

If you cannot join a Team, please be a Sponsor of the Team of your choice. A pledge form is enclosed. Please remove it, choose your team or teams, mark your pledge and mail in the form. At least 80% of the proceeds of Bay Birdathon '92 will go to National Audubon's Mono Lake Defense Fund and to the Mono Lake Committee, for continuing the struggle to preserve Mono Lake. The balance will be used for local Audubon programs.

For more information, please call Harrison Karr at (415) 892-6342 or me, at (415) 434-4262 ext. 6005.

—STEVE MARGOLIN

The Mono Lake Committee is embroiled in an extended legal battle against formidable opposition, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power--all to preserve a jewel on the east side of the Sierra Nevada. Mono Lake, a salty brine shrimp-filled lake just east of Yosemite, is threatened by the diversion of mountain streams to water pipelines leading to southern California. The diversions have been suspended by a preliminary court order, but the legal maneuvering continues.

On April 25, Golden Gate Audubon Society and Marin Audubon Society will again join together in the National Audubon Birdathon to raise funds for the Mono Lake Committee and National Audubon's Mono Lake Legal Fund. At least 80% of the proceeds will benefit Mono Lake. The balance will be used for Audubon Chapter activities.

You can help save Mono Lake. Please support Bay Birdathon 1992.

Bay Birdathon 1992

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY



Bay Birdathon 1992

GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY
MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

Pledge Form

_____ I PLEDGE TO SPONSOR ONE (OR MORE) OF THE FOLLOWING BIRDATHON TEAMS AT THE
RATE OF \$ _____ PER SPECIES. CONTACT ME AFTER THE APRIL 25 BIRDATHON TO
COLLECT MY PLEDGE.

_____ ALLEN'S HUMMERS. Allen Fish, Joe
DiDonato, John Keane, Sally Mills, Dave
Rienschke.

_____ BIG OIL BIRDERS ("BOB"). Chevron
employees, with two sub-teams (pledge for
either or both):

_____ BOB1: Dave Quady, in the Bay Area.

_____ BOB2: Bob Lewis, on the Gulf Coast.

_____ BIKING BUSHED KIDS, a Birdathon on
bicycles. David Rice, Paul Green, Helen
Green, Marty Reuting, Don Rivenes.

_____ BINO'ED BARE-EYES, birding in the
Amazon Basin in Ecuador. Lina Prairie,
Beverly Anderson, Helen Green, Paul
Green, Leora Feeney, Janet Wessel.

_____ LOONATICKS, following ABA big day rules.
Alan Hopkins, David Wimpfheimer, Dan
Singer, Donna Lion, David Holway.

_____ MINES ROADRUNNERS. Participants in
Marin Audubon's April 25 Mines Road field
trip; call Gayanne Enquist at (415) 663-
8361 (days) for information.

_____ MURPHY'S M.O.B. (Many Observers). Dan
Murphy & you, when you show up for this
field trip in San Francisco with Golden
Gate Audubon; call Dan at 564-0074 for
details.

_____ NOT-SO-OLDSQUAWS. Ann Dewart,
Emilie Strauss, Janet Wessel.

_____ SEMI-PULVERIZED PLOVERS. Rich Stallcup

CASUAL VAGRANTS. Janet Homrighausen
& Mark Homrighausen.
ENVIRONMENTALISTERS, a walking big
day, following ABA big day rules. Alan
Hopkins, Jan Anderson, Mark Elliott.
HUFFING PUFFINS. Nicki Spillane, Tom
Spillane, Pete White, Dolores White, Mike
Hebert & Karen Hebert.

Margolin, Arthur Feinstein, Ruth Vose,
Barbara Salzman, Bruce Walker, Jean
Thomas.

WANDERING TATTLERS. Rozilyn Bazurto,
Tom White, Julie Lane, Penny Watson.
WATERFOUL (an all-EPA team). Harrison
Karr, Wendy Pulling, Paul Jones, Bill
Keener, Frank Gardner.

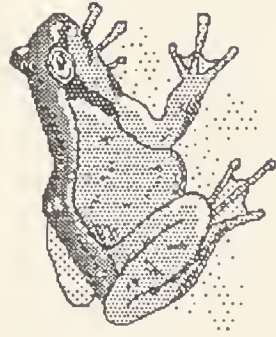
I WANT TO SUPPORT THE TEAM WITH THE HIGHEST SPECIES TOTAL AT \$_____ PER SPECIES.

I WANT TO SUPPORT THE TEAM WITH THE LOWEST SPECIES TOTAL AT \$_____ PER SPECIES.

I ENCLOSE A CONTRIBUTION OF \$_____. (Enclose check payable to Marin Audubon or Golden Gate Audubon.)

I WILL LEAD MY OWN TEAM AND WILL GATHER PLEDGES OF AT LEAST \$1.00 PER SPECIES.

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE TO THE EXTENT ALLOWED BY LAW.



NAME:

ADDRESS:

PHONE:

FOLD FORM & SEND TO ADDRESS ON REVERSE



Return address:

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

BAY BIRDDATHON 1992
c/o HARRISON KARR
1150 East Court
Novato, CA 94945

CONSERVATION NOTES

WETLANDS BILLS, continued

themselves subject to discrimination under the Clean Water Act's regulations. It would put preservation of wetlands into the goals statement of the Clean Water Act, and strengthen the role of Fish and Wildlife when commenting on permit applications before the Corps of Engineers. It would expand the number of regulated activities to include discing and draining of wetlands (techniques used around the Bay to avoid wetlands by making them dry and removing wetlands vegetation). It would require the Corps of Engineers to analyze the cumulative effects of its permit program. If it is shown that significant wetland losses continue under the Corps Nationwide Permit System, the Corps will have to revise or revoke those permits in order to reduce impact on wetlands. To ease the regulatory burden, it will allow the Corps to allot increased manpower for processing applications for small projects (under one acre). This will insure processing within 90 days, and avoid long delays for small landowners. It will allow artificial wetlands created out of dry land to escape regulation. No longer can someone complain that his swimming pool is a wetland, and perhaps subject to regulation. It will allow a farmer to return to growing crops on a field now a wetland if that field were once farmed within the previous five years. (It would not, however, allow the farmer to build a development on that field.)

Rep. Barbara Boxer's bill (HR) while not as comprehensive, will help to set the wetlands debate in the right direction.

In addition to thanking these two for their action, please write your Representative and urge that support be expressed for both of these efforts.

—ARTHUR FEINSTEIN

ENVIRONMENTAL COALITION STATEMENT

Steven Volker, attorney on the staff of the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, speaking for us and the rest of the more than a million informed and concerned citizens represented by the coalition, made the following statement at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Hearing, Sacramento, Jan. 9, 1992:

The decision whether to list the Delta Smelt is a decision about values. It is about respect for our natural and cultural heritage, respect for science and respect for the integrity of our ecosystem. It is also about respect for the laws that prohibit subordination of scientific fact to political expediency. Most important, it is about our duty to future generations.

Over the last century we have witnessed the destruction of one of the most vital and prolific estuarine systems in the world, the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta and San Francisco Bay. The Delta is the largest estuary on the West Coast of North America, historically discharging through a complex web of sloughs and channels half of all runoff in this state.

Before man began irrevocably changing the face of that landscape by damming rivers and diverting freshwater flows to farms and cities, the Delta comprised vast wetlands teaming with millions of waterfowl. Fish and shellfish thrived in extraordinary abundance, providing a plentiful source of protein for native communities as far upstream as the headwaters of the Sacramento River on the slopes of Mount Lassen. After European settlement, these abundant fish and shellfish populations formed the basis for a flourishing fishing industry that stimulated the proliferation of a number of ethnic fishing communities along the shores of San Francisco Bay such as the shrimp fisherman of China Camp in Marin County and the herring fisherman of the Italian settlements in North Beach and Martinez.

Even as late as the middle of this century, before the Central Valley Project and State Water Project began diverting most of the estuary's freshwater flows to Southern California, striped bass and salmon still thrived in the Sacramento River system. Young children could still swim in deep, clear pools of the San Joaquin River without fear of toxic contamination. Families could still picnic by the banks of the Delta rivers and not be repelled by the stench of pollution.

But in one short generation we have destroyed this beauty, this serenity and this natural ecological abundance and diversity. For most of the freshwater that once flowed freely through the Delta is now pumped South. What remains in many areas is a chemical stew so shallow, so filthy and so stagnant that even the fish can't use it.

Our great fishing and shellfishing communities have collapsed. The commencement of massive pumping from the Delta near Tracy by the Central Valley Project in 1951 and by the State Water Project in 1967 substantially reduced and redirected freshwater flows in the Delta. In recent years those projects have greatly increased their rate of diversion to 6 million acre feet annually, a volume often greater than the net annual outflow of the Delta (e.g., 1987 - 5.1 MAF, 1988 - 4.2 MAF, per DWR). In some months those facilities divert fully 80 percent of the Delta's freshwater flow.

A number of studies have documented a direct correlation between reduced Delta outflow and declining populations of key fish species, including Chinook salmon, striped bass, split tail, longfin and Delta smelt and American shad. The principle adverse effects of these diversion projects are direct entrainment by the pumps, reverse flows disrupting migrations and egg dispersal, increased water temperatures and salinity, and relocation of the food-rich entrapment zone in

Suisun Bay, source of the phytoplankton and zooplankton which feed the higher trophic levels.

While water exports have steadily increased over the last two decades, the populations of many animal and plant species which inhabit this estuary have plunged to the brink of extinction. Striped bass number only 30 percent of their historic populations; winter-run Chinook salmon number less than 1 percent. Delta smelt, a species found nowhere else in the world and whose well-being closely mirrors the health of all the other fish which inhabit the Bay Delta Estuary, has suffered a precipitous decline to only about 10 percent of its historic population. Ironically, the two species of fish which historically provided the most *abundant* source of food for the Patwin Indians which formerly inhabited the Delta, the Sacramento perch and the thicktailed chub, have already been driven into extinction within their historic range.

Despite years of hearings concerning this deplorable decline in our fishery and wildlife resources, the State Water Board has failed to adopt water quality standards sufficient to protect the Delta. The fish and wildlife of the Bay and Delta have taken a beating while the State Water Board has dithered. Only prompt listing of the Delta smelt under the Endangered Species Act can save this ecosystem now.

State and federal environmental laws prohibit this ecologic destruction of the Delta. They require that the State Water Board establish water quality standards sufficient to protect all beneficial uses, including fish and wildlife. They also require that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service list under the Endangered Species Act species such as the Delta smelt whose population has sharply declined due to ongoing destruction of its habitat. The Fish and Wildlife Service's notice of proposed listing carefully addresses each of the five statutory criteria governing the decision to list: destruction of habitat,

overutilization, disease or predation, inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms, and other factors affecting the continued existence of the species.

In each case, the scientists of the Fish and Wildlife Service, together with Dr. Peter Moyle and other biologists at the University of California at Davis, have carefully documented overwhelming evidence which compels listing of this species. The spring freshwater flows which prevent saltwater intrusion in the Suisun Bay nursery area which the Delta smelt require for reproduction have severely declined due to increased exports since the early 1980's. Since 1985, in fact, diversions have caused reverse flows in the lower San Joaquin River for more than 150 days each year. Reverse flows have become common during the Delta smelt's spring spawning season, when its larvae are particularly vulnerable to entrainment in the diversion pumps. The result has been an unprecedented and extreme depression in Delta smelt population.

Despite its authority and, indeed, duty to restrict export levels in order to preserve the Bay-Delta ecosystem, the State Water Board has done nothing. Instead, it has mounted a campaign of misinformation, asserting without any scientific support that it can assure water quality without guaranteeing freshwater flows. The State Board is dead wrong. Freshwater flow is as essential to water quality as light is to color. The hearing record before the State Board is replete with overwhelming evidence that only flow requirements and export limits can assure protection of the fish and wildlife resources of the Delta and Bay. Only flow can assure adequate dispersal of fish eggs and larvae to nursery areas, avoidance of reverse flows and entrainment of fish in export pumps, distribution and mixing of nutrients in San Francisco Bay, and protection of phytoplankton and zooplankton production in Suisun and San Francisco Bays.

Finally, we hesitate to dignify with a response the baseless propaganda disseminated at yesterday's press conference by the water export industry. The Delta smelt sampling data on which they rely on argue that the Delta smelt population has increased does not in fact support that reckless conclusion. There are four Delta smelt sampling programs: the summer ternet survey in the Delta and Suisun Bay, the monthly mid-water trawl survey throughout the lower estuary, the Suisun Marsh otter trawl survey conducted by the University of California, and the autumn trawl from San Pablo Bay to Rio Vista on the Sacramento River and Stockton on the San Joaquin River. The first three surveys have consistently shown a sharp decline and continuing depression in Delta smelt populations during the last decade. The last survey, because it is conducted during the fall when the Delta smelt are migrating, is not a reliable index of the overall Delta smelt population. All the knowledgeable scientists agree that the results of the fall survey merely reflect whether the trawl happens to catch a school of fish that was moving through the sampling area. For the water industry to seize upon the fact that last fall this sample scored a direct hit on a school of migrating Delta smelt is an exercise in infantile logic.

In conclusion, it is high time that our elected officials stood up to the water industry lobby and followed the law. The scientific evidence could not be more overwhelming that the Delta smelt, and the entire Bay-Delta ecosystem, is on the brink of extinction. Prompt, decisive and courageous action is needed now to preserve this precious environmental legacy for future generations.

BACK YARD BIRDER

If you're a lucky bird watcher you will see bits of bird behavior which characterize a species. It might be some sort of courtship display such as the dance of a Sandhill Crane which we saw on a trip to the delta near Walnut Grove in January. Our timing was perfect as the cranes were "warming up" for their carefully choreographed dances and were even offering their mates special sticks and reeds, behavior usually reserved for their breeding grounds in the north.

At a glance Sandhill Cranes may seem to resemble egrets and herons who are also long-legged and long-necked birds. But cranes fly with their necks extended while heron family members' necks are folded back or kinked to form an S-shape. The walk of a crane is fluid, courtly and graceful unlike the herky-jerky steps taken by herons. When gliding in for a landing the cranes looked just like Stealth bombers with their 6-7' wing spans. Sandhill Cranes come in two sizes, lesser and greater. The lesser breeds further north in Alaska, Siberia and N. Canada but both can be found wintering in the Central Valley along with the beautiful Tundra Swans, in separate fields of course. Cranes are handsome gray birds with a bald forehead of reddish skin and blackish legs, feet and bill. Sometimes their gray feathers become stained brown in feeding and preening. Their species has been around since the Eocene period, 40-60 million years ago. But their numbers have been decreasing alarmingly with hunting and the loss of marshlands and prairie habitats. They aren't picky eaters; they relish everything from vegetation and tubers to insects to mice, frogs and crayfish, snakes and lizards, birds and bird eggs. Fast flyers, cranes have been clocked up to 35 m.p.h. When migrating one flock was spotted by a commercial airline pilot at 12,000'!

Because of their size and grace the courtship dances of cranes have been mimicked by tribes in Africa, Australia,

Japan and by Native American tribes. (Crane species are found on all continents except So. America). Some ballet movements seem to resemble several of the ritualistic movements in the cranes' dances. They bow, hop and skip, and jump up to 8' in the air with wings spread and legs dangling. All this is accompanied by comical-sounding bugling and "ga-roo-ing." These deep, resonant notes may carry up to two miles. I know that we heard them before we saw them! Many other species dance during courtship: gulls, pelicans, grouse, herons and some shorebirds. But none have developed such style as the cranes' dances.

Cranes are apparently monogamous and may mate for life. They still perform their displays each breeding season. After building a nest, usually a mound in the marshes, 1 to 3 eggs are laid. Only two hatch, one earlier than the other. The chicks must be kept separated or the larger one would harm the smaller, so each parent shepherds a chick as they feed. The young stay with their parents for 10 months and are shooed away when they return to the breeding grounds the next spring. In captivity cranes live long lives, up to 24 years.

Sandhill Cranes are very wild and wary; being within ½ mile may be too close for their comfort. So we birded from our cars. Their cousins, the Whooping Cranes, have hopefully been saved from extinction. The Sandhill Cranes have done their part to help, raising Whooping Crane chicks as their own. Whoopers lay two eggs but only one chick survives, so one egg was removed from the nests for incubation by the surrogate parents, who then migrate to a different area. This has established a second population, safe-guarding in the event of the outbreak of some disease.

Plan a trip to see these magnificent birds during their next wintering-over in California. If you have birder's luck you might see some mighty fine dancing.

—MEG PAULETICH

JENISE CAN BAND — SO CAN YOU

In *The Gull* last year I read an article about the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory migration program and attended their orientation meeting in April. I completed the informational questionnaire and signed up to be either a hawkwatcher or bander. I had some second thoughts about the banding program, however. It included extra hours for on site training and longer hours on the Marin Headlands on my actual volunteer day (a minimum of once every two weeks). My only "wildlife" experience was assisting Leora Feeney a little bit with the burrowing owl colony in Alameda. I was not certain I really wanted to make the commitment of time and energy that would be required. Like many of us in the environmental movement, I believe in thinking globally and acting locally. I recycle my trash and write letters to my elected officials and attend Audubon conservation meetings. I wanted to do something more, something hands-on and that certainty kept me from throwing up my hands and admitting that I had nothing to offer the GGRO.

I was interviewed by a veteran bander and chosen for the program. The training program was superb. We worked with live chickens, weighing, measuring, handling and becoming familiar with the procedures that would be necessary when we actually caught a hawk. All of the trainers were volunteer banders from GGRO. Many of them seemed not to be professional animal handlers and I found myself becoming more assured of being able to actually perform my duties as an apprentice bander. I attended raptor ID sessions, watched for raptors in my week-ending birding walks and cleared my calendar for every other Sunday from late August until late December.

The day before my first banding day I found that I had worked myself into a state bordering on terror. What could possibly have made me think that I could

hold a hawk and put a band on it and take the required measurements and stay calm, all while being closed up in a somewhat rickety blind. What if I forgot my lunch? What if I had to go to the bathroom? What if I left my co-banders in the lurch because I forgot how to perform my tasks? The first Sunday out was foggy and very cold. I then began to have not only second thoughts but third thoughts about this project I had launched into. Then we caught a hawk, an immature male Cooper's Hawk.

The day leader and site leader in my blind let me share in the tasks of banding and measuring. They asked me to release the hawk after we finished the processing and as I walked out on the hill and released the hawk into the air, I felt an incredible elation. The training had prepared me for the scientific part of the program but I had been totally unprepared for the poetry of the experience. It was, and still is, an incredible experience for which I find no words. I did find myself re-reading Robinson Jeffers and Aldo Leopold and Annie Dillard and saying, oh, so that's what they meant.

I have learned a number of new skills (equipment handling, scientific reporting) and brushed up on some old skills (vacuuming and scrubbing sinks) and hopefully I have added some minuscule amount of data to a body of knowledge which will augment our knowledge of habitat and behavior. But I also have an incredible number of scenes in my head: the sun setting into the ocean as I leave the Marin Headlands, kettle of raptors performing aerobatics in front of our blind for hours at a time, the howling wind, freezing fog and warmth of the sun on the rocks behind the blind, sometimes in the same day. As if that weren't enough, my banding partners are wonderful, the GGRO newsletter is witty and entertaining, we banded 810 hawks (a record year for GGRO) and the end of season potluck featured the best food I've ever had.

You can reach Allen Fish or Buzz Hall at the GGRO (415-331-0730) if you want to find out more specifics about the program. If you are interested and have second or third thoughts as I did, I would be delighted to talk to you about my experience. You can call me at (510-522-1366). I hope to see some of you out on the hill next season. I'll be the Second Sunday bander wearing four pair of socks and carrying two lunches.

—JENISE PORTER

SAN FRANCISCO BREEDING BIRD ATLAS

During 1991 members of Sequoia Audubon Society and the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory started a 5-year Breeding Bird Atlas project for San Mateo County. Taking advantage of this opportunity, a dozen Golden Gate Auduboners began a Breeding Bird Atlas for San Francisco County, which is "piggy-backing" on the San Mateo County Atlas. The basic goal is to confirm the presence and breeding status of each potential breeding species in each 5x5 kilometer atlas block.

After the first season, the 9 island blocks (all the Farallones, Treasure Island, Yerba Buena Island, etc.) have been completed or nearly so. The 11 blocks that cover San Francisco proper and northernmost San Mateo County are progressing well, but we could use more breeding observations. We welcome any reports of confirmed breeding, or probable breeding by unusual species. However, we particularly need records for owls, raptors, vireos, warblers, and wrens. Other difficult species include White-throated Swift, kingfisher, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, crow, raven, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and Rufous-sided Towhee.

Reports should include the species, exact date and location, a description of the evidence for breeding, and the name, address, and phone number of the observer.

Reports should be sent immediately, so that any unusual sightings can be checked by the Atlas team. Send reports to me at Dept. of Birds and Mammals, California Academy of Sciences, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA 94118.

—STEPHEN F. BAILEY

NEST WATCHERS WANTED

Peregrine Falcons overwinter and nest around the Bay Area on buildings and bridges. In cooperation with the Peregrine Reintroduction Program there is a group that monitors Peregrine nests, recording activities, behavior and breeding success. Volunteer nest-watchers are needed for this project. Training is provided. If this interests you, please write or phone the coordinator, Dave Gregoire, 37 La Vista Way, San Rafael, CA 94901, (415) 456-4174; or Bill Van Meter, 415 Perkins St., Oakland, CA 94610, (510) 452-3302 for further information and details.

MONO LAKE BENEFIT CRUISE

GGAS member and faithful Mono Lake campaigner **Mildred Bennett** invites our attention to another fund-raiser cruise for Mono Lake. August 13-23, 1992 there will be a natural history trip, Inside Passage and Gulf of Alaska with the Mono Lake Committee. It will be aboard the 98-passenger **Society Explorer**, sailing from Prince Rupert, B.C. to Kodiak Island in the Gulf of Alaska. With experienced naturalists and numerous excursions ashore you will observe plant and animal life of seldom visited coves and inlets. Emphasis will be on wilderness, its hidden treasures and spectacular scenery.

The Mono Lake group rate starts at \$2612 for double occupancy and includes \$250 to help save Mono Lake. For complete information write to Ms. Bennett at 2719 Marin, Berkeley, CA 94708.

NEWS FROM OUR RANCH

Audubon Canyon Ranch (415) 868-9244
Shoreline Hwy., Stinson Beach, CA 94970
Wildlife Sanctuaries & Centers for Nature Education under joint sponsorship of Golden Gate, Madrone, Marin and Sequoia Audubon Societies
Gary Holloway, President

GOLDEN GATE REPRESENTATIVES ON THE AUDUBON CANYON RANCH BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bruce Walker, ex officio
Nicki Spillane

Dan Murphy
Steven Margolin

PUBLIC SEASON BEGINS MARCH 14

The 1992 public season begins at the Ranch on Saturday, March 14. By then we should know if Great Blue Herons will nest this year. As of the beginning of February they had not yet arrived in our heronry. A number of pairs have started nests above Smiley's Bar in Bolinas. The story of nature is a story of change. You'll have to come out to see this year's story for yourself. One way or the other, the Great Egrets should be in by the Ranch's opening. The other real attraction in the early season is wildflowers. Take a walk on any of our trails during March or April to see a wonderful display of coastal wildflowers. By May almost all of them will be gone.

BE A HOST

Join us as a weekend host during our public season at the Bolinas Lagoon Preserve. This is a great way to get to know a little about the Ranch and to assist us in our effort to introduce the public to ACR. All you have to do is greet visitors, direct them to the overlook, or answer a few questions. You will probably get enough time off to hike a trail and enjoy a bit of the Ranch yourself. Volunteers should expect to arrive at the Ranch at around 9:45 and stay until 4:30.

THANK YOU B of A

For the third consecutive year the Bank of America Foundation has granted \$14,000 to ACR to provide transportation for school children who visit ACR. As you know, hundreds of urban children visit ACR as part of our school program.

Many of these children are from schools whose transportation budgets have been slashed by budget shortfalls. It is through the continued generosity of the Bank of America Foundation that many visiting school children have participated in our education program and will continue to do so for the coming year. On behalf of the Ranch and the school children who benefit from our programs thanks very much to the Bank of America Foundation.

—DAN MURPHY

SPRING BIRDING AT SFSU CAMPUS

Join Dennis Beall, Professor of Art, San Francisco State University, on Sunday, March 22, 1992 for the annual Spring Campus Bird Walk. There is lots to see and hear on this campus. Nesting Cliff Swallows will be making their annual visit to set up housekeeping on the front of the J. Paul Leonard Library building. Bring lunch and liquids if you wish to continue birding at nearby Lake Merced. Meet at the entrance to Parking Lot 7, Tapia Drive, off Font Blvd., at 8:30 a.m.

For further information call Harriet Talan, (415) 338-2132.

WETLANDS LOBBY WEEK

Come join us for a fun-filled week in Washington, D.C. in the spring. See the cherry blossoms and at the same time help us demonstrate to our legislators how important wetlands are to us. The Clean Water Network, the environmental coalition that is working to pass an environmentally sound Clean Water Act is having a lobbying week starting on April 5.

Come along and join us and thousands of others in celebrating wetlands and clean water in Washington D.C. Call the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) in Washington, D.C. for more information at 1-202-783-7800, or call the GGAS Office at 510-843-2222.

(See *The GULL* for December 1991 p. 180 for Arthur Feinstein's report of his October trip to Washington.)

LAST SEED SALE UNTIL FALL

Again we offer a variety of reasonably priced high quality seed mixtures which are well-suited to the locality. The feeders we feature are selected as the best quality for the price.

To avoid disappointment we urge you to order and prepay to guarantee the type and quantity of seed you require. We will have some extra quantities available, but not in the 50-pound size.

Again for your convenience we are including a Friday afternoon pickup date for those whose Saturdays are too hectic.

ORDERING INSTRUCTIONS

Please order by March 27, at the latest, making your check payable to GGAS. Confirmation will be sent prior to the sale.

Pick-up in Berkeley, Friday, April 3 between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., and Saturday, April 4 between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m., at the GGAS office, 2530 San Pablo Ave., Suite G. Parking is on the north side of the building. (The nearest crossstreet is Dwight Way.)

There will be no San Francisco pickup site. Though we have willing hosts for the sale, the orders are too small for a special delivery by our supplier and too large for the available volunteer vehicle. (Please call the office if you have any suggestions as to how we might remedy the situation.)

GIFTS and BEQUESTS

FOR GGAS

In Memory of

Nancy Albright

Gift of

Bonnie Killip

FOR CONSERVATION

In Memory of

Elsie Roemer

Agnes & Tom Oczkewecz

Dick & Claire Johnson

The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor of or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the GGAS Board of Directors. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to Golden Gate Audubon Society, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G, Berkeley, CA 94702. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in *The Gull* as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Secretary.

GGAS BIRD SEED AND FEEDER SALE

ORDER AND PREPAY BY MARCH 27
PICK UP ON FRIDAY APRIL 3, SATURDAY, APRIL 4

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Telephone (day) _____ (evening) _____

SEED			QUANTITY	AMOUNT
GGAS' OWN PREMIUM MIX	20 lbs.	\$10.00		
<i>Contains only red and white millet and black oil sunflower seed.</i>	50 lbs.	\$19.00		
VOLKMAN WILD BIRD SEED	20lbs.	\$ 9.00		
<i>Composed of only red and white millet—no sunflower seeds (no squirrels)</i>	50 lbs.	\$16.00		
BLACK OIL SUNFLOWER SEED	25 lbs.	\$15.00		
	50 lbs.	\$25.00		
NIGER (THISTLE SEED)	5lbs.	\$10.50		

FEEDERS

DROLL YANKEE 16"	\$28.00		
THISTLE FEEDER	\$10.00		
HUMMINGBIRD (window)	\$10.00		
ZINGER (saucer style)	\$15.00		
HUMMINGBIRD (16 oz. bottle)	\$12.00		
SUET CAGE (2"×5"×5")	\$ 5.50		
SUET CAKE (7 oz.)	\$ 3.25		
FEEDER POLE (sectional)	\$16.00		

Be sure to include your check with a stamped and self-addressed envelope.

SUB-TOTAL	
ADD .0825% TAX	
TOTAL	
CONTRIBUTION TO GGAS	
TOTAL	

Pick up in Berkeley at the GGAS office.

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NORTHERN CALIFORNIA RARE BIRD ALERT

(510) 528-0288 Update: (510) 524-5592



Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc.

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